



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
OCT. 15, 2010

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### FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL AND TEENS *WHITE OUT* CRASHES

*~ You, too, can wear white on Oct. 19 to participate in Florida's White Out ~*

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Traffic crashes are the #1 killer of teens in Florida and in the United States. To keep more teens safe in the driver and passenger seat, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles encourages all Floridians to participate in a statewide [White Out](#) next week. The Department asks Floridians to show support by wearing a white shirt on Oct. 19, 2010, to help *white out teen crashes*. The Department will observe [National Teen Driver Safety Week](#) on Oct. 17 – 23, and use the opportunity to educate teens and their parents about staying safe behind the wheel.

“The number of teens who died in traffic crashes dropped 21 percent between 2008 and 2009, which signals that Florida is heading in the right direction,” said DHSMV Executive Director Julie Jones. “Despite the decline, 153 families felt the impact last year when they lost their teens to crashes. No one wants to see someone with their whole life ahead of them die, especially when the cause of death is preventable. Join us Oct. 19 as we *white out* teen crashes.”

Teens (ages 15 – 19) have the highest crash rate of any age group in Florida. Below are statistics from the [Florida Traffic Crash Statistics Report 2009](#) that provide some additional insight.

- 772,910 teens are licensed to drive in the Sunshine State.
- 29,485 crashes involved teens last year.
  - 153 teens died.
  - 19,292 teens were injured.
- Florida's teen drivers are twice as likely to crash as their parents and three times as likely to crash as their grandparents.
- Teens represent five percent of Florida's driving population, but they are involved in more than nine percent of Florida's vehicle crashes.

Since 2008, the Department has launched [www.TakeTheWheel.net](http://www.TakeTheWheel.net), an interactive website by teens for teens, as well as [Drive with CARE](#) (Courtesy, Attention, Responsibility, Experience) to educate teens and their parents about Florida's graduated licensing law and the importance of parental involvement in teaching teens to drive. Drive with CARE provides a [drivers guide](#) available online and in state and tax collector operated driver license offices throughout the state. The [Florida Sheriffs Association](#), numerous state and local law enforcement agencies, and safety advocates throughout Florida are joining the Department in this important campaign.

*See page 2 for details on an upcoming White Out press conference in your area.*

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The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles invites members of the media to the *White Out Teen Crashes press conference* next week. The event coincides with *National Teen Driver Safety Week*, Oct. 17 - 23.

Details of the event are as follows:

**What:** White Out Teen Crashes Press Conference

**When:** Oct. 19, 2010  
10:15 a.m.

**Where:** Lincoln High School  
3838 Trojan Trail  
Tallahassee, FL 32311-3810

**Who:** Leon County Schools, Lincoln High School, Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Sheriffs Association and other partners in teen driver safety

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